

Local Apartment Communities Support Relief Efforts in Japan

Continued from cover.

ROSS Management Services (formerly Realty Management Services) is currently spearheading an effort in which more than 25 different Washington-area apartment communities will help raise money for the American Red Cross' disaster relief efforts in Japan. "We're currently planning to donate any and all application fees received during the first two week-ends in April to the Red Cross," said Brent Stephens, director of advertising and corporate communications for Bethesda, Md.'s ROSS Management Services. "We are glad to be able to work together with our competitors to help people who are in need."

ROSS Management is no stranger to raising disaster relief funds. Last year, it successfully

"I think it's a devastating event that occurred, this is a small way of giving back. Participating in this initiative was an easy decision to make."

—Tara Geary, A. J. Dvoskin Associates



coordinated an internal campaign that donated apartment application fees generated from its own managed properties to support the Red Cross' efforts in Haiti following the massive 2010 earthquake there. That campaign raised nearly \$2,500, but this year's campaign will be on a much wider scale, with multiple property management companies participating.

Stephens and his colleagues already had a good working relationship with many of their competitors. "ROSS Management is very active in our local industry associations, like the Washington Property Managers' Association (PMA) and the Apartment and Office Building Association of Metropolitan Washington (AOBA)," he explained. "Via our local association activities, we pretty much know everybody else who's working in the industry. It's like a small town, and while

we're all competitors, we're friendly competitors who view one another as colleagues."

When asked why ROSS Management Services decided to ask their competitors to join with them in their efforts to raise funds for Japan disaster relief, Brent Stephens said it seemed like the natural thing to do. "It made perfect sense since we all know each other, we talk, and we're friendly."

In fact, it is not uncommon for employees of one management company to end up working for a competitor. "A former ROSS staffer is now working for a competitor, and she was a gateway for us to invite that competitor to participate in the fundraising effort," Stephens explained.

The Washington property management community responded favorably to the idea of working together to

Continues inside.

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